Vision Statement

The City of Worcester envisions a transportation network that supports people of all ages and abilities with safe, equitable and sustainable mobility choices.

Goals

The four main goals of the project are: Safety, Equity, Sustainability, and Connectivity

Safety: Build and operate safe streets for everyone regardless of age, ability or transportation mode with a goal of zero traffic fatalities or serious injuries. Maintain transportation infrastructure in good condition.	**Equity**: Provide all residents with quality and affordable transportation options to meet their daily needs. Prioritize transportation improvements serving communities that have been historically neglected, underserved or disproportionately impacted by past transportation decisions, while recognizing and reducing adverse impacts that the transportation system has had on these communities.
Sustainability: Reduce impacts of the transportation system on the environment and public health by shifting mode share to sustainable travel choices, reducing the use of fossil fuels, and incorporating green infrastructure to improve air quality, flooding, and urban heat island effect. Align transportation investment with land use regulations to promote walkable mixed-use neighborhoods with access to transit and micromobility travel options.	**Connectivity**: Develop an integrated and efficient transportation network that offers multiple transportation choices and expands opportunities to access local and regional destinations.

Focus Areas

This study has directed focus on travel and mobility for all modes.

- **Walking & Accessibility** – This focus area aims to create a pedestrian-friendly urban environment that promotes accessibility and safety. The related goals under this focus area emphasize the implementation of Complete Streets, ensuring that roadways are designed to accommodate all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, and public transit users. This involves integrating elements such as improved sidewalks, crosswalks, and signals to enhance overall walkability throughout the city. Prioritizing accessibility with walkability will help the City work toward creating a better-connected community for all.
- **Biking & Micromobility** – This focus area seeks to encourage the use of bikes and micromobility options, such as scooters or other personal mobility devices. The City's focus is on establishing a comprehensive network of bike lanes and dedicated paths, making it safer and more convenient for cyclists and other micromobility users. Additionally, related strategies support the integration of bikeshare programs and other micromobility options to provide residents with flexible and affordable alternative modes of transportation between and within neighborhoods.
- **Public Transportation & Transit** – This focus area emphasizes the enhancement of existing transit systems including WRTA buses and the MBTA commuter rail, while also supporting emerging trends in the public transportation space. This focus aims to reduce gaps in the transit network and improve reliability and efficiency, making public transportation options more appealing to residents and visitors.
- **Vehicular Network, Parking, and Curbside** – This focus area recognizes that driving is currently a predominant mode of travel for many individuals in Worcester and strives to create a safe and efficient vehicular network. This involves the development of well-maintained roadways, traffic management systems, and strategic parking solutions. Related strategies explore optimizing curbside management to provide efficient access to land uses and to improve traffic flow, addressing speeding on roadways. By addressing the needs of drivers while also considering other goals and the impact on other types of road users, the City aims to strike a balance that promotes safety, convenience, and accessibility for all.
- **Shared Mobility** – This focus area centers on embracing Transportation Network Companies (TNCs – think Uber and Lyft) and leveraging shared mobility solutions to help expand options for travel. Related strategies support the integration of electric vehicle carshare, in addition to bikeshare and e-scooter share programs to provide residents with a diverse and convenient array of choices for getting around the city to help advance mobility options.

CONNECTIVITY

Expand Transportation Options

First/Last Mile Strategic Plan to Improve Access to Transit. Consider prioritization of improving access to bus stops in areas of higher transit demand or stops with current or historically high ridership.

Expand WRTA Service Through Addition of Crosstown Services. Complement hub and spoke operations with additional routes to better serve travel patterns.

Study and Prioritize Curb Space for Best Uses. Explore use of curb space for other functions outside of on-street parking such as: short-term parking, loading or un-loading zones, micromobility parking zones, improved bus stops, expanded sidewalks, outdoor dining, parklets or green infrastructure, etc.

Encourage Community-based Education Programs. Support local organizations that can help residents of all ages learn about alternative transportation - assist with buying transit pass and riding bus, host neighborhood bike rides, etc.

Expand WRTA Paratransit Service to Provide Responsive On-demand Service. Consider pursuing use of Via or other transportation network company to support on-demand paratransit service city-wide.

Study Potential for On-Demand Microtransit. Encourage WRTA to provide on-demand transit service in lower-density areas that lack connections to transit and/or have popular destinations. (For recommended areas, see map on Transit/Public Transportation board)

Facilitate Active Transportation

Develop a Pedestrian Infrastructure Toolkit. Develop a plan that includes context-specific solutions for safer pedestrian network, which could include enhanced policies around vehicular regulations.

Create a Neighborways Program. Create a neighborhood scale greenway program on local residential streets to enhance pedestrian and bicycle use through traffic calming and other low-cost measures.

Develop Bike and Micromobility Network. Fund studies and concept designs for installing micro-mobility infrastructure. (For recommended network, see map on Bike & Micromobility Network board)

EQUITY

Foster Engagement

Identify and Address Transportation Barriers by Past Transportation Decisions. Acknowledge inequities in the transportation system caused by past decisions and investments or disinvestments and implement projects and programs to reconnect these communities.

Develop a Transportation Equity Framework. Develop a roadmap for decision-makers, employees, stakeholders, partners, and greater community to discuss and create an equitable transportation system

Develop Public Engagement Toolkit. Create a public engagement toolkit to ensure coordinated, transparent, inclusive, and thoughtful process. Use for all projects.

Improve Physical Accessibility

Complete ADA Transition Plan for the Right-of-Way. Identify the condition and compliance of existing pedestrian facilities and establish a priority plan for bringing them into compliance with ADA & PROWAG standards.

Create a Sidewalk and Curb Ramp Implementation Plan. Pursue funding for plans and construction of compliant sidewalks and curb ramps citywide, beginning with identified priority areas.

Improve Transit Rider Experience

Implement Transit Real-Time Information. Encourage WRTA to improve app / bus tracking.

Develop and Implement Bus Shelter and Bench Policy. Policy will help identify where and what type of stops and shelters should be located throughout the city, to determine general maintenance and snow removal procedures.

Increase Economic Accessibility

Continue Fare-Free WRTA Transit Service. Extend the fare-free transit service to promote transit ridership.

Conduct Parking Studies in Key Districts. Execute a parking study to assess use of on and off -street parking and develop a management and pricing plan, as well as signage plan.

Safety

Build Safe Streets For All Users

Design and Process Standardization. Create and implement right-of-way design standards across departments and standardize policies and practices including training and project execution.

Execute Interim or Pop-up Safety Projects. Create a program for pilot projects to use pop-up bike lanes, road diets, or curb extensions to showcase city's potential for greater vehicular, bike and pedestrian safety.

Develop Bike and Micro-mobility Facility Standards. Develop new standards that comply with contemporary design standards.

Develop a Traffic-calming Toolkit. Develop a brief guidance document on department-approved traffic calming measures that can be implemented during regular pavement management projects and standalone projects.

Conduct Road Diet Study(ies). Analyze roadways in Worcester that could accommodate lane reduction to improve safety and access for all modes.

Traffic Analysis Requirements & Development Code Audit. Review traffic analysis requirements for proposed developments and shift away from prioritizing vehicle level of service to focus on complete streets priorities.

Develop and Launch Traffic Signal Improvement Program. Connect and upgrade aging traffic signals to prioritize safe and efficient movement of people traveling by all modes. Ensure modernized traffic systems are ADA compliant, proactively maintained, and centrally managed.

Conduct Corridor and Intersection Studies in Advance of Pavement Projects to Advance Complete Streets. Execute studies of key corridors or intersections to analyze feasibility of roadway improvements to improve the safety and access of those walking and cycling.

Prioritize Vulnerable Road Users

Expand Safe Routes to School Program. Expand SRTS efforts city-wide and encourage safe systems approach to increase walking and biking to schools.

Review and Update Ordinance on Biking on Sidewalks.

Incorporate Age- and Dementia-friendly Design Guidance in City Code and Design Manuals.

Implement Improved Street Lighting, Emphasizing Pedestrian-oriented Lighting. Support improved nighttime visibility for vulnerable road Users and incorporate pedestrian-scale lighting in safe streets and complete streets projects.

Reduce Crashes and Severity of Outcomes

Lower Statutory Speed Limit City-wide and Enact Safety Zone Speed Limits at Appropriate Locations. Eliminate regulatory speed zones with inappropriately high speed limits.

Create and Implement Vision Zero Safety Action Plan. Adopt Vision Zero Policy (eliminating all traffic fatalities and severe injuries.

Sustainability

Green the Streets

Incorporate Green Infrastructure (Trees, Rain Gardens, etc.) in Roadway Projects.

Develop Streetscape and Street Tree Standards.

Increase Non-auto Mode Share

Pursue Employer Commute Programs or Transportation Demand Management Plan (TDM) (encouraging use of non-single occupancy vehicle options for employees or residents of new developments). Consider policy or development code changes that would require or encourage TDM programs for larger employers or large residential/commercial developments.

Inventory Bike Parking, Develop Guidelines, and Deploy Additional Parking.

Implement a Bikeshare and/or Micro-mobility Share Program. Explore options to introduce public or private operator systems back to the City to provide alternatives to single occupant vehicle trips.

Improve Transit Headways and Hours of Service. Encourage WRTA to improve transit frequency and expand hours of service.

Reduce Vehicle Emissions

Encourage and Expand Electric Vehicle Carshare. Encourage e-carshare opportunities by offering discounted or free parking spaces to carshare companies with electric vehicles or provide access to nearby charging infrastructure.

Explore and Pursue Transit Electrification. Encourage WRTA to electrify their system.

Expand Publicly Accessible Electric Vehicle Charging. Continue installation of publicly accessible EV chargers throughout the city on municipal properties. Explore public/private partnerships.

Improve Transit Reliability

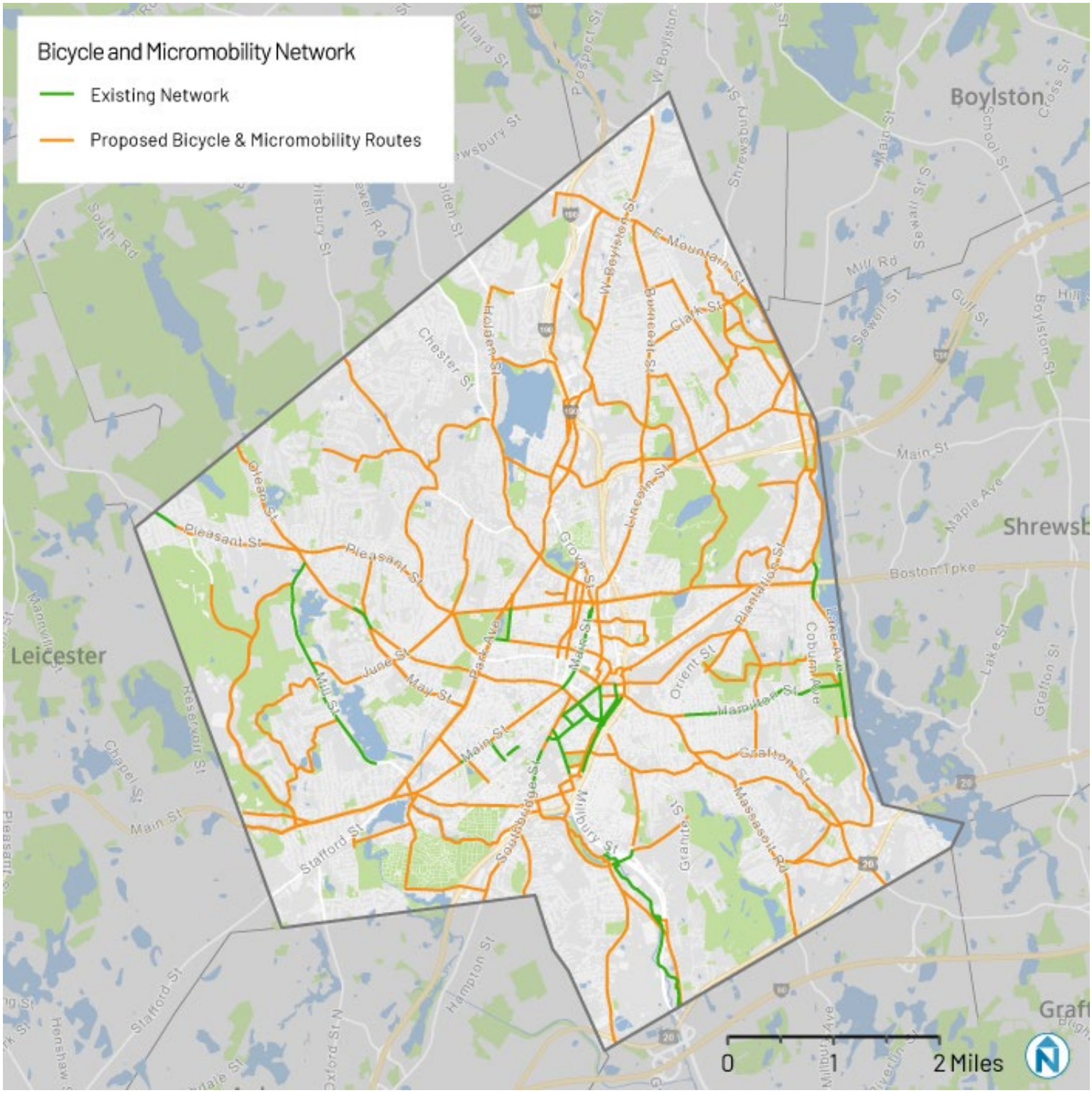
Coordinate Scheduling Between Key WRTA Bus Routes and MBTA Commuter Rail. Coordinate with the MBTA to increase frequency and reliability of the Commuter Rail service between the City and Boston.

Consolidate Bus Stops and Consider In-Line Stops Where Appropriate to Reduce Transit Delay and Improve Reliability. Improve WRTA efficiency through reviewing issues with transit speed.

Implement Transit Signal Priority on Key Corridors. Work with WRTA to improve reliability of transit through transit priority measures. (For recommended corridors, see map on Transit/Public Transportation board)

BIKE & MICROMOBILITY NETWORK

The vision for the bike and micromobility network is to have safe routes for these alternative modes of transportation along most major roadways to connect people to schools, commercial destinations, recreational facilities, and government buildings, etc. The City identified the potential for facilities for these roadways through strategies such as 1) separated off-street paths OR 2) on-street facilities through methods such as road diets or reducing lane widths. This network has not yet been prioritized, but that will be an important step in building out this network.

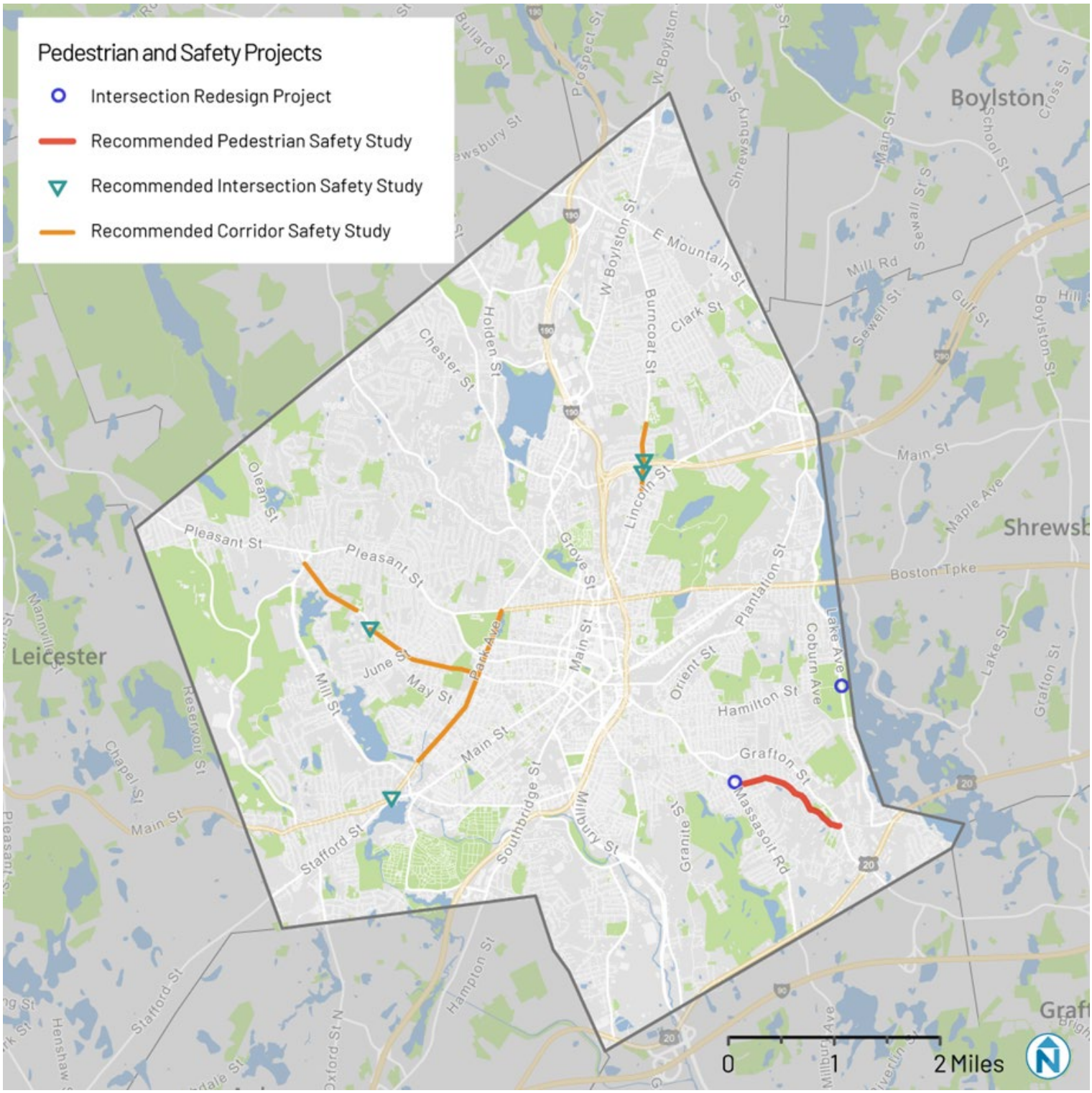


The proposed bike and micromobility corridors are a component of this Connectivity strategy:

Develop Bike and Micromobility Network. Fund studies and concept designs for installing micro-mobility infrastructure.

PEDESTRIAN AND SAFETY STUDY MAP

The corridors and intersections recommended for priority safety or pedestrian studies are corridors with a high rate of crashes and in need of study or redesign to incorporate complete streets principles.

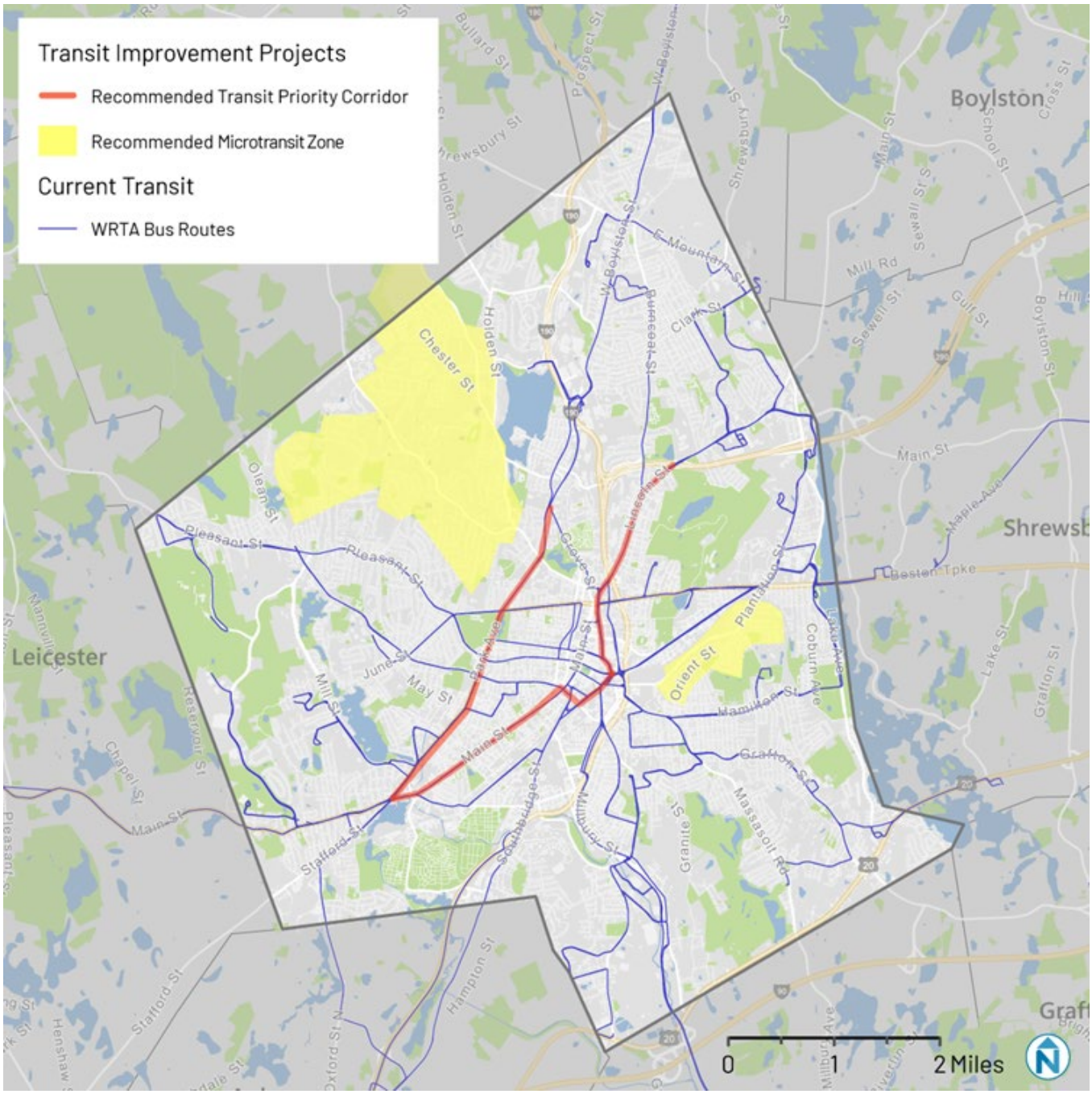


The proposed pedestrian and safety projects are a component of this Safety strategy:

Conduct Corridor and Intersection Studies in Advance of Pavement Projects to Advance Complete Streets. Execute studies of key corridors or intersections to analyze feasibility of roadway improvements to improve the safety and access of those walking and cycling.

TRANSIT / PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Transit priority is recommended on roads with the highest bus frequency. Transit priority signals are integrated into traffic signals and can improve bus speed and reliability. Areas recommended for microtransit service are lower-density areas that lack connections to transit but have popular destinations. Microtransit zones could be 'node-based', which could provide connections from specific locations within the zone to major transit stops nearby.



The proposed transit improvements are a component of these strategies:

Connectivity strategy:

Study Potential for On-Demand Microtransit. Encourage WRTA to provide on-demand transit service in lower-density areas that lack connections to transit and/or have popular destinations.

Sustainability strategy:

Implement Transit Signal Priority on Key Corridors. Work with WRTA to improve reliability of transit through transit priority measures.